

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Listing of Claims: This listing of claims replaces all previous versions and listings of claims in this application.

Claim 1. (Previously Presented) An animal excretions-treating material comprising particles, each particle being composed of a core layer of fibers and a skin layer to cover the core layer, the skin layer containing α -starch and fibers.

Claim 2. (Previously Presented) The animal excretions-treating material as set forth in claim 1, wherein the fibers constituting the skin layer are short fibers having a mean fiber length in a range of 0.02 to 1 mm.

Claim 3. (Original) The animal excretions treating-material as set forth in claim 1, wherein the mean particle size of the α -starch in the skin layer is at most 0.25 mm.

Claim 4. (Currently Amended) The animal excretions-treating material as set forth in claim 1, wherein the ~~composition of the skin layer is in a~~ ratio of α -starch to fibers in the skin layer is in a range of 20:80 to 80:20 ~~20 to 80 and 80 to 20~~.

Claim 5. (Original) The animal excretions treating-material as set forth in claim 1, wherein the fibers in the skin layer are those of pulp.

OK to enter 9/9/04 KG